

# **Observing Systems Council**

## **Terms of Reference**

### **Purpose**

The **Observing System Council** is the principal advisory body to the Under Secretary for NOAA's Earth observation and environmental observation-related data management (end-to-end collection, processing, storage, archiving, accessing, and disseminating) activities. It also serves as NOAA's principal coordinating body to the White House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources (CENR) Subcommittee on Earth Observations. Specific tasks include:

- Provide recommendations to the NOAA Executive Panel (NEP) on requirements, architectures, and acquisitions to meet NOAA, national, and international observing needs.
- Oversee the work of the NOAA Observing Systems Architect, providing guidance in the development of the NOAA Integrated Global Environmental Observation and Data Management System architecture.
- Work with local, state, regional, national, and international partners to develop global-to-local environmental and ecological observation and data management systems for comprehensive, continuous monitoring of coupled ocean/earth/atmosphere/land domains.

### **Membership**

#### **Co-Chairs:**

- NOAA Satellite and Information Services Assistant Administrator NOAA  
Weather Services Assistant Administrator

#### **Executive Secretariat and Contact Person:**

- NOAA Satellite and Information Services

#### **Principals**

##### **Senior Representatives from:**

NOAA Program Planning and Integration (PPI)  
NOAA Fisheries (NMFS)  
NOAA National Weather Service (NWS)  
NOAA Ocean Service (NOS)  
NOAA Research (OAR)  
NOAA Marine and Aviation Operations (NMAO)  
NOAA Chief Information Officer (OCIO)  
NOAA Satellite and Information Service (NESDIS)  
NOAA Program Analysis and Evaluation (PA&E)

#### Advisor

- NOAA Observing Systems Architect

#### Staff

- NOAA Observing Systems Architect office

#### **Committees**

The Council may form committees to achieve specific tasks. Such committees may include persons who are not Members of the Council, but the Council will seek to include a Council Member on all committees. Committees will use the same decision making process followed by the Council. The Council may terminate committees at will.

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Participate in the planning and programming phases of the annual PPBES cycle to foster a NOAA Program to advance NOAA's efforts in efficiently and effectively developing an integrated global environmental and data management system.

- Provide corporate oversight of the Observing Systems Architect
- Review observing systems requirements
- Identify gaps in NOAA observations
- Review architecture alternatives
- Analyze architecture alternatives and risks
- Recommend acquisition of appropriate observing systems to meet NOAA, national, and international architecture requirements
- Maintain cognizance over NOAA observing systems activities while coordinating NOAA participation in national and international Earth observation efforts (e.g., Ad Hoc Group on Earth Observations)

#### Members

- Attend council meetings
- Identify line office points of contact for interaction with NOAA Observing Systems Architect

**Meeting Frequency:** Hold meetings at least quarterly.

#### **Decision Making Process**

Decisions will be normally reached by consensus. The Co-Chairs will strive for consensus on every issue, but maintain 51% of the vote. Therefore, the Co-Chairs make the final decision when consensus is not achieved.

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